

THE LABOUR ORGANISER

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MONTH BY MONTH

THE TALKIES ARE COMING.

Our readers will no doubt have noted in the daily Press an announcement that the National Publicity Bureau, the new organisation formed to conduct propaganda on behalf of the Government, has opened its campaign and has put eleven new talking film vans on the road. These vans are to be on the road throughout the summer, and to visit constituencies in all parts of Great Britain. The programmes include speeches by the Prime Minister and Sir John Simon, and a film illustrating the Government's work since it came into office. Unless there is a good deal of padding the latter film surely will be the shortest on record. We will wager, however, that it will omit a good deal more than it will show. There is also to be a film on what is being done for British agriculture (though it will omit mention of *who* is being done in the process) and this film carries a short address by Mr. Walter Elliot. Other films are in course of production.

So now we know the worst. We shall not expect Mac's Eleven to be any more effective in stemming the tide than the canned speeches of Tory leaders have been on previous occasions. Our enemies have chosen a method of presenting their case which does not permit of the questions the electors are thirsting to put to the Government, a fact on which the authors doubtless congratulate themselves. They, however, very much over-estimate the ignorance of the masses if the pictures we see in certain Tory publications are going to do the trick for them. The electors want facts, food, wages, good conditions and good housing, and not to be shown pictures of where the Government alleges these things obtain, always, of course, in some distant and unknown part of the country. We predict that the Tory vans are going to add to the gaiety of nations, and some entertainment is in

store for all concerned when Labour men and women see the films.

FILMS AND TELEVISION.

We have drawn attention to the above matter because we consider that films have definitely entered into political propaganda, and are in future to count in any electoral contest. Fortunately, Labour is not idle in this matter, and what is more we have infinitely more attractive material to handle. Our columns have borne witness to the fact that thinkers and workers in the Movement are already busy preparing films, which present pictures of life as it is and as it should be presented. It is the real thing that will appeal. Greatest publicity has, of course, been given to the work of Rudolph Messel and his friends, but we illustrated only a few months ago how even a Ward Committee took up this matter, and prepared a film which drew crowded houses. The time is approaching when this matter can be no longer left to "private enterprise" within the Movement, and when the serious thought of the heads of the Movement must be given to the question. A new and devastating form of propaganda is with us. Political parties have been slow in taking up the matter, but now that the pace is set a demand will doubtless arise for something more to be done. In this connection let us look ahead. Television is also just round the corner. The time may come, and come soon, when speeches may be relayed and the speaker, his platform, and his audience, be seen simultaneously upon the screen. If this does not actually come at the next election, and it is quite possible, we shall certainly expect it at the following one.

THE GENERAL ELECTION.

A month or two ago we were warned of the possibility of a General Election before the year is out. Prominent Tory speakers

at once set to work to assure the country that nothing of the kind was contemplated. There would be no General Election till the Government had run its course, or at any rate until next year. Reports are now reaching us from all parts of the country, where the lesser known Tory speakers in the constituencies are definitely assuring their audiences that the General Election may be expected this year. Why this thusness? Has the word gone round to "National" organisations to get ready? Our readers will do well to observe these signs of the times. The course of events, not too difficult to foresee, may present, in the autumn or early winter of this year, a first-rate opportunity to the Government to come to the country. Further, history has written a warning to the Government which hangs on to the end of its tether. In such circumstances, to assure ourselves that the election will not come is sheer blind folly. The coming months ought to be treated as definitely pre-election months, and the steps that one would take if the matter were a certainty should actually be taken. On this question we shall say more next month.

ABOUT

We should like to **MEMBERSHIP.** draw our readers' attention to the important article on membership and contributions which appears in another column. Here is illustrated the experience of a party which changed its contribution from the old minimum of sixpence for women and one shilling for men, to the penny per week basis, and, bearing out what we have always urged, membership and income has never since looked back. Membership in fact went up from 700 to 3,250, proving beyond doubt that an economic contribution is the only sound basis on which to make and hold members. As we have before pointed out, the existence of a large membership presents peculiar problems, which so far have only been studied in a minority of constituencies, and which are not understood by the Movement at large. Mr. A. Rose, the author of the article, discusses these problems in the article referred to, and his contribution is a valuable guide to those who would emulate Southampton's example and bring their membership to what it ought to be if democracy is to function within their area.

THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACTS.

Amending Statutory Rules and Orders.

An Order in Council further amending the Representation of the People Act has recently been made, affecting a number of the forms prescribed by the last consolidating Order in Council, which our readers will recollect was published as R.P. 134.

The present Order makes certain minor amendments in the forms to be filled in by householders and occupiers. These changes are mostly of a simplifying character, in no wise modifying the intent or purpose of the forms previously used. The new forms will shortly be distributed by registration officers to all premises.

The amending Order also makes more minor amendments to other forms consequent on the passing into law of the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, 1933. It prescribes a declaration to be taken in the case of blind voters voting as proxies in pursuance of the Blind Voters Act, 1933, and in a few other directions small verbal changes are made which make for simplicity in the forms.

The official designation of the Order is Statutory Rules and Orders, 1935, No. 169, and the same is published as R.P. 142, price twopence nett, obtainable from H.M. Stationers.

JANUARY COPIES WANTED.

Urgent Appeal.

Will readers who have spare copies of our January issue please send same immediately to the Editor?

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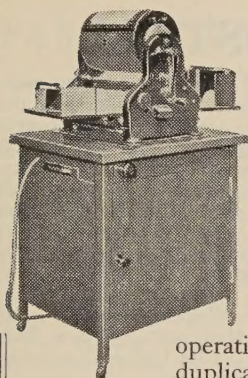
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AGENCY CHANGES AND APPOINTMENTS.

NORTH EAST HAM. Mr. W. H. Jacob, late of Wolverhampton, was recently appointed to the vacancy in this constituency created by the retirement of Mr. Frank Edwards some time ago on account of ill-health. Mr. Jacob is a past chairman of the Agents' Union, and has had a wide experience in constituency organisation.
Address: 16, High Street North, East Ham South, London, E.6.

NORTHAMPTON. Mr. Walter Lewis, late of Nuneaton, has been appointed Labour Agent at Northampton, commencing duties on 1st May. Northampton address: Labour Party Offices, Charles Street, Northampton.

NUNEATON. See above. Mr. Walter Lewis relinquishes the agency in Nuneaton at the end of April.

COLCHESTER. Mr. J. K. Arnold, late part-time agent at Exeter, has been appointed full-time agent at

Colchester vice Mr. R. H. R. Davey, resigned. Mr. Arnold commenced duties at the beginning of April. Address: Labour Party Office, St. Botolph's House, Colchester.

EXETER. Mr. W. H. Harrison has been appointed part-time agent at Exeter vice Mr. J. K. Arnold who has secured a full-time appointment at Colchester. Address: Trades and Labour Hall, Northernhay Place, Exeter.

NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS. Mr. J. Selwyn Jones has been appointed full-time agent vice Mr. W. Speakman who relinquished office a month or two ago. Address: Labour Party Central Offices, Labour Club, Earlstown, Lancs.

MONTHLY NEWS SHEETS—

Send your enquiries to the Specialists, Ripley Printing Society, Ltd., Ripley, Derbys. State quantity

THE LITERATURE STALL

"The Position of the Middle-Class Worker in the Transition to Socialism," by Lawrence Benjamin. Price twopence. The Labour Party.

That the middle-class worker must be won over to Socialism has passed from being an idea to be scoffed at, into an axiom now generally accepted among thinking Socialists. And it is not necessary either that Socialist beliefs should be watered down or made specially palatable for the middle classes in order to win them over. Nevertheless, many of us will have felt the need for a specially prepared case for the middle classes, and dealing particularly with the fears which engulf even those who have tendencies to Socialism. Here, then, is a pamphlet for which there is a need. It is illustrated, attractively got up, and presents our case with sound and convincing arguments. This pamphlet should be a best seller.

"Water Supply—A National Problem and its Solution." Price one penny. The Labour Party.

Here is a pamphlet for which we at any rate have a thirst. The townsman well supplied with water from communal sources does not appreciate the gravity of the water problem to the countryman, or the difficulties of communal supplies for comparatively small communities.

As indicated, we have a special interest in this problem ourselves, for at the time of writing our own well has gone dry, and at the cost of sinking another 20 feet and deepening the pump correspondingly, a fresh spring has been discovered. This is a problem individually solved at a cost. But the problem of water supply should be no more one for the individual, even in rural parts, than for those living in the towns. There has been an iniquitous neglect of this question and the neglect continues. It is a matter on which not only the conscience of the nation, but even the conscience of our own urban vote must be aroused, and this pamphlet, which contains Labour's water plan, is worthy of serious study.

What also may interest the literature seller is a hint from us that the water problem is likely to be

more acute during the coming summer than ever, notwithstanding the comfortable assurances of Government apologists. The newspapers will, of course, stunt the matter, and in doing this they will doubtless provide us with a market for this pamphlet. Get it then in your hundreds and sell it to save the countryside!

The "Fair Wages Clause" — an explanatory statement. Price twopence. The Trades Union Congress.

This is a pamphlet of prime importance to public representatives. The pamphlet contains a model clause suggested by the General Council, and just the sort of information on this matter which doubtless many public representatives are thirsting for.

"How Empires Grow." By J. F. Horrabin. Price (stiff boards) one shilling (post free, 1s. 2d.). N.C.L.C. Publishing Society Ltd., 15, South Hill Park Gardens, London, N.W.3.

Mr. J. F. Horrabin is well known to our readers. He was the Labour M.P. for Peterborough, and several of his publications have received notice in our columns, notably his short history of the British Empire, "Outline of Political Geography," "Plebs Atlas," etc. He was the illustrator of Wells' famous History, and is the creator of "Dot and Carrie" and of the Arkubs.

Here, then, is another book from Mr. Horrabin's pen on a subject on which he is well qualified to write. How Empires have grown provides the key to some of the complications in foreign affairs to-day. The appetite of the British and other Empires may be satiated, but the younger nations want to expand, and we have no doubt that they know already all about what Mr. Horrabin has written. It is this, at any rate, that lies at the root of the Far Eastern trouble. The book is illustrated with some of Mr. Horrabin's extremely effective maps, and it is highly interesting from cover to cover. The average man ought to know more about this matter. Cloth bound the book costs 2s. (2s. 2d. post free) as above.

FAMOUS PARTIES PRESENT THEIR ACCOUNTS

The annual report and accounts of the Woolwich Labour Party, presented to the thirty-second annual meeting held on 26th March, make, as usual, inspiring reading. The number of individual members at the close of the year, after removing lapses was 4,255. Of the lapsed members 298 were due to removals and 493 to other causes.

The income from members' subscriptions during the year showed an increase, not less a sum than £695 14s. 10d. having been collected, an increase of £33 over the previous year. The sum received for affiliation fees was £606—also an increase over the previous year.

The Woolwich Labour Party distribute twenty thousand copies of the "Citizen" each month, and in addition have distributed 20,000 "Victory for Socialism" leaflets each month since May, 1934. 160,000 leaflets were distributed during the last eight months of 1934. Altogether the report of the Woolwich Labour Party is a wonderful story of united effort and of triumph over the sort of difficulties which beset all parties.

We have also received the annual report and balance sheet of the Deptford Labour Party. This, too, is one of the premier parties. The membership for this, a single-membered division, was no less than 3,252 at the close of the year, an increase of 202 over the membership for 1933. Membership income reached a total of £440 7s. 2d., an increase of £52 14s. 7½d. over the previous year. The report, as usual, contains a list of voluntary membership collectors of whom there are nearly eighty, including the Women Section collectors.

A noteworthy feature of the accounts is that apart from membership income £491 3s. 1½d. was received from Wards, Women Sections, Sports Clubs and Choir, the total income of the Party being well over £2,000.

We are delighted to note that Deptford does something for the children—1,800 children were taken for an outing to Epsom Downs, and several of the wards have held functions for the children.

Our readers will regret to hear of the continued indisposition of Mr. Frank Organ, the able agent for the Deptford Labour Party, and we extend on their behalf our heartfelt wishes for his complete recovery to health.

The Mile End Labour Party is one which appears to be making progress, though unfortunately we are so far without the last annual report. We understand, however, that 820 new members were made during 1934, bringing the total to 2,040 as against 1,595 in 1933. The contributions also increased from £224 to £269. We are interested to note also that Mile End had a gross income of £425 from its various social activities, apart from a £48 surplus from a Loan Club run in connection with the Party.

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JACK CUTTER

And now (as the advertisements say), having explored the Fascists' alleged organisation in my article last month, we will take a look at the Tory organisation; the famous "Tory Democracy," the creation of Disraeli, the "Uncle Arthur" of the Tory Party.

The Conservative Party machine appears a little complex at first sight. One has to learn to differentiate between the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations and the "Central Office." The National Union is just the representative body of the local constituency parties. It has nothing to do with administration. "Central Office" sees to that. "Central Office" is the ingenious and ingenuous body which produces for one election, portraits of a ferocious scoundrel labelled "Ramsay MacDonald," holding a pistol at our heads and saying, "It's *YOUR* money we want," and for the next election, portraits of an angelic and saintly-looking statesman, labelled "Mr. Ramsay MacDonald," depicting him as the saviour of the nation's financial stability.

"Central Office" produces all those leaflets and periodicals such as the "Popular View," a monthly pictorial on the lines of the "Daily Sketch" or "Mirror," containing pretty pictures of hives of industry (Caption:—"Britain's smoking chimneys and happy workers are full steam ahead again—thanks to the National Government!") and carefully refrains from distributing them in the depressed areas.

"Central Office" controls the appointment of the Party Agents and has two examinations for them, the first of which would be passed easily by any Labour Party street steward, and the second by any Labour Party Ward Secretary who knows his or her job.

"Central Office" is run by Lord Stonehaven, Sir George Hennessy, Sir George Bower and Lady Fal-mouth. It appears that mention in Debrett is an essential qualification for the job. But who appoints this

SCOUTS AROUND THE TORY PARTY

gallery of titled comptrollers, to whom they are answerable for their deeds and decisions, and who controls them are mysteries no Tory can elucidate for me up to the present.

I am told that "Central Office" keeps a list containing hundreds of names of people who have written offering themselves as Tory candidates. Mostly such people state what amount of £ s. d. they are "good for." Constituency parties are supposed, in theory, to supply their own candidates, but when you note some of the specimens adopted—with no contact whatever with the adopting constituency—you are at liberty to make what assumption you like as to from whence their names were suggested.

There is much dissatisfaction and bitter complaint in the Tory constituency organisations these days about "Central Office." It is your wholehogging Tory who does the donkey work of the party in the localities and your W.H.T. is claiming that "Central Office" is not a Conservative Party organisation any longer, but a slave of the National Government. (I can't see any difference, myself, but the W.H.T.'s seem to think the National Government is altogether too Socialistic!)

Many rank and file Tories are becoming quite excited about the whole business. "How long is it?" they ask, "since Central Office even mentioned the Conservative Party in any of its literature? What right has Central Office to ignore the vast majority of the Party on the India question, on compensation for slum landlords and House of Lords' 'Reform'?" Primrose Dames, it appears, have met in their "locals" and passed strong resolutions about it all; bold, bad lads in the Junior Imperial League, it seems, are up in arms with talk of "selling the pass," but no one seems to be able to do anything about it. When feeling is running rather high someone sends Mr. Baldwin along and he lulls the malcontents to sleep again with no apparent difficulty.

A new development of Tory organisation is the establishment of local



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advice and assistance bureaux. It was seen that most Labour Agents and Labour Councillors gave help and advice to all who sought it on such questions as pensions, L.E. benefit, P.L. relief, rentis, etc., to such an extent that people who usually voted Tory were receiving such assistance and, being grateful for practical service, were voting Labour. The local Tory bureaux are not meeting with a great deal of success, because in every district there are a few persons with a known reputation for handling "case work" effectively, and invariably these are Labour people. The public know their reputations and continue to go to a known trier.

A case in point can be quoted. A Labour Party I know very well set up a tenants' advice department when the 1933 Rents Act became law. It discovered one with a flair for successfully handling rent cases and dealt with literally hundreds of cases each month, returning large sums to tenants' pockets in successfully handled cases of excessive rents. The local Tories set up in opposition, but found very few "clients" and those they did find for whom they could legally press cases were a great trouble to them because the erring landlords were staunch supporters of the Tory Party!

Canvassing classes are another recognised feature of internal Tory planning. Most of the students at these classes seem to be women and whatever they are taught in class they soon forget, apparently, for as soon as they get on to the doorstep invariably they fall back on the old bogey-bogey stuff. But perhaps that is all they are taught.

Considering the material side the Tory Party has to rely on to get its electoral work done (the Primrose Dame type of female and the 'umble "non" who "won't be dictated to by no blinkin' Trade Union" but is a doormat for everyone else) it is quite efficient as a machine. Its agents are a better type than they used to be, in the main, and mostly know their jobs. Without money they would find it difficult to equal any of our local organisations. Indeed, if they had to start off level with the average local Labour Party—to pay their way from the subs. of working and unemployed men and women; to win their elections by presenting a convincing and

positive case and to rely entirely on voluntary workers fired with the ideals of their cause, they would indeed fare badly in the struggle for political power.

The Tory machine is clearly developing its "mechanical arm" for the next election. Batteries of loud speakers, film units and so forth will be used in every constituency. Clever posters supplied by "Central Office" will be on every hoarding and a flood of cunningly conceived "literature" in every letter-box. The Labour Party will doubtless have its posters and its loud speaker vans too, to some extent, but I back the doorstep talks and the personal service of the Labour Party constituency organisation to beat all the ballyhoo of the Colonel Blimps.

USEFUL OFFICE EQUIPMENT FOR AGENTS AND SECRETARIES.

What secretary is there who does not feel occasionally that his time is wasted addressing hundreds of envelopes or circulars, particularly when, as is mostly the case, it is the same addresses week after week and month after month.

In another column will be found an advertisement of a little office appliance which should prove a god-send to most secretaries and agents. With the aid of the "Addressit" addressing equipment, time and labour can be saved, and envelopes can be addressed from 250 to 350 per hour—in other words, in less than a quarter of the time that would be taken for hand addressing.

The "Addressit," which is quite the cheapest addressing equipment that we know of, costs only 12s. 6d. (postage 9d.). No special equipment is required because the master copies can be either written by hand or typed on a sheet of special Addressit paper, which is provided with the equipment. No metal plates or stencils are needed, nor does the equipment need ink. Further, the "Addressit" is supplied complete with a set of card index cards so that the container in which the equipment is supplied can be used as a card index box. The "Addressit," too, is quite simple in preparation and distinguished for cleanliness.

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MORE HINTS ON THE LAW OF LIBEL

We have been interested in a couple of articles on the law of defamation by Mr. Arthur Logan Petch, LL.B., which have appeared in the "Co-operative Guildsman," the official organ of the Co-operative Men's Guild.

Mr. Petch is the gifted son of the Mr. A. W. Petch, Office Manager of the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers, who is, of course, well known to many of our readers.

Mr. Petch's statement of the law is carefully and simply set forth, and the subject is one which has an introspective interest to our readers. A year or so ago we published a series of articles on the Law of Libel and Slander, and we note that the conclusions we then set out are confirmed by this authority. We take the liberty, however, of making one or two extracts from Mr. Petch's articles, the points of which seem to us to well bear repetition.

"Many Guildmen are interested in the publication of periodical matter. In these publications the risk of libel is always serious, and the utmost care should be taken regarding every statement concerning political opponents, or, indeed, in criticising one's own side.

"During recent years amendments of the law of libel have accorded those connected with newspapers a certain measure of protection and an easier way out of the consequences of libel than fall to the lot of the average offender, but the large number of Labour and Co-operative magazines do not benefit by this protection on account of the definition of "newspapers" contained in the Newspaper Libel and Registration Act, 1881.

"Where the libel is contained in a newspaper or similar publication the sale of each copy is a publication of the libel, and the distributor as well as his principal is held responsible. There is a gleam of hope for the innocent distributor inasmuch as unless he is the author, printer or original publisher of the libel, he may plead in an action against him that he did not in fact publish the libel, and may prove that he did not know the paper contained, or was likely to contain, a libel.

"This protection is, of course, a very necessary one, for a person might quite innocently hand a newspaper to a friend. It has been stated that a newspaper is not like a fire, a man may carry it about without being bound to suppose that it is likely to do injury.

"Again, it is necessary to emphasise that where a printed publication contains a libel, the author, printer, publisher and distributor, all individually and separately, incur responsibility for the offence. There is no remedy for one against the other, nor, in fact, is it within the law to guarantee the printer against the consequences of the libel. A printer may not sue on this guarantee, because the consideration is bad in law.

"An extract from Parliamentary papers, or a Parliamentary speech, while *prima facie* privileged, would not be privileged if, for instance, a speech given in Parliament was printed and circulated by a Member, and there was proof of malice. Otherwise, a Member might be able to libel his opponent or some other person, and circulate his libel with impunity.

"Reports in a newspaper of proceedings at public meetings are privileged, provided they are fair and accurate, that the meeting was lawfully held, and for the furtherance or discussion of any matter of public concern, and that the matter complained of was of public concern or that its publication was for public benefit.

"Where, however, the report is published maliciously or the newspaper refuses or neglects to insert a reasonable letter or statement by way of contradiction or explanation of such report, the privileges may disappear. Thus, a newspaper cannot claim privilege for a report of defamatory interruptions and derisive observations by a part of the audience, to the exclusion of the speech of those who intended to address the meeting. And where no speech was in fact delivered it has been held that the publication of the interruptions, etc., was not for the public benefit or matter of public concern."

An Important Article.

BUILDING MEMBERSHIP

Changing to 1d. per Week—Voluntary Collectorship—Passing the 2,000 Mark—
Attention to Fluctuating Income—Graphs.

By MR. A. ROSE, Labour Agent, Southampton.

The problem before our Party in the introduction of its Socialist programme, will become most acute *after* it has secured a majority in the House of Commons, when every effort will be made to stampede the electors against the introduction of such measures. This can only be safely met by organising Labour supporters *inside* the Party to the greatest extent possible. It appears quite certain that important Socialist measures cannot be successfully carried through the House without the organisation of the Labour electorate *inside* the Party to an extent beyond the conception of many parties and many officials.

The proportion of supporters that can be enrolled as Party members, is problematical, as the experiences of Parties differ widely.

The *past* pace of organisation of membership has, however, been set by local needs or circumstances, aided by national stimulus. The emotional drive to secure the passage of Socialist measures through the House of Commons, and the urgent local and national need of funds and organisational improvements, are now determining factors in the development of membership on a very much larger scale.

The experience of the large membership Parties should be useful as a guide in erecting the machinery for future development. It is in the hope that the accompanying graphs and notes will be helpful in this way, that they are submitted. Although they relate exclusively to Southampton, they may be taken as a typical experience of many large Parties.

The graph marked (1) covers a period of about 9 years, from 1926 to 1934, and graph (2) covers from 1929 to 1934.

Graph 1.

This shows the annual membership; the relative increase and decrease in the Local Government Labour vote in each year, taking 1920 as a basis. (The total L.G. vote has not been used because

the number of seats contested varies each year. The figures used, however, are useful in showing the effect on membership and contributions of fluctuations in votes.)

Graph 2.

Shows the monthly collection of membership contributions.

Membership.

It should be noted that the increase of contributions to 1d. a week (from 1s. men and 6d. women, per annum) was followed by a sharp increase in membership. Membership has continued to rise (from 700 to 3,250) and has not been adversely affected to any great extent by fluctuations in the local government vote. The rapid rise in 1933 does appear, however, to have followed the rise in votes in 1932. The fact that political reverses did not seriously affect the membership, supports the statement made in the opening statement above.

The slight drops in 1930 and 1931 both followed a sharp rise, and both are due to some extent to members coming in faster than our machinery could adapt itself to retain them. The second drop, however, was accompanied by a steep drop in contributions and may have been influenced by a reaction against the Labour Government, and its influence on collectors as well as members. Taking the whole year of 1930 there was an increase, and in 1931 the drop was very slight, and very much less acute than the drop in contributions.

Local Government Vote.

As stated above, this line can only be used to show to what extent membership and contributions are affected by increases and decreases of Labour votes.

Whilst *membership* shows practically no adverse effect, *contributions* appear to have followed the fluctuations in the votes in a remarkable manner, a rise in votes in one year, being followed by a rise in contributions the following year, and vice versa.

Whilst the membership remains

steady during periods of adversity, the lack of enthusiasm affects both the payments by members, and the willingness of collectors to collect.

Annual Contributions.

The immediate rise in the amount of contributions disproves the contention that an increase of contributions drives members away. Similarly, the argument that poor supporters cannot afford to belong to the Party if the contributions are 1d. a week, has been disproved by the facts shown under notes on general information.

The decline in 1928, *which took place whilst membership was rising*, was due to the absence, through illness, of the Secretary for three months. At that time the Party Secretary was responsible for the central membership arrangements, i.e., issue of cards, records, contact with collectors, etc.

Early in 1929 a central Membership Secretary was appointed to issue cards, keep membership records, receive contributions, keep contact with collectors and ward contribution secretaries. The effect of taking this work away from the Party Secretary is very clearly indicated by a rise in contributions, and an increase in the average amount collected.

With the growth of membership it has become necessary to divide the central work, and one member now keeps the central contribution register, and card index of members names and addresses.

The average amount of contributions per member per annum is between 2s. 6d. and 2s. 9d. It is estimated that the possible amount, allowing for various reasons, is 3s. 8d. The loss is, therefore, about 1s. per member per annum. On a membership of 3,000 this represents £150 lost through inefficiency in collecting. This statement in no way reflects upon the collectors. A voluntary system cannot be 100 per cent. efficient with a large membership. It is suggested that when membership passes the 2,000 mark the advantages of the voluntary system are outweighed by the disadvantages.

The building up of a successful system of *voluntary* collectors, breeds hostility to a system of *paid* collectors. Without paid collectors it is impossible to expand indefinitely, as we must be able to do. The transfer to a system of paid collectors is

accompanied by an immediate charge on the funds for wages, which represents a loss until improvements in the amount of contributions collected, and membership, are effected.

These points have to be faced in planning development.

Monthly Collections.

It will be observed that, with the exception of the current year, this line is in fairly regular pattern each year.

The high points at the beginning and end of the year, are due to annual and half-annual payments, and this, to some extent, accounts also for the rise in the middle of the year.

The regular low points are May, August, October and November. The drop in May appears to be directly due to the diversion of effort to the annual May-Day Bazaar. The August drop is due to summer holidays, and October, November, to the municipal elections.

Two years ago we issued a ward graph to each of the 120 collectors, pointing out the loss of contributions each May and urging them to guard against it. The drop was less acute last year, and has disappeared this year.

Collectors.

We have 120 collectors and 16 ward contribution secretaries in addition to the central Membership Secretary. All give voluntary service, no payments of commission, or reward of any kind being given.

The number of members allocated to each collector varies from 2 to 110, and the average amount collected varies from 10d. to 4s. 4d. per annum. Our records show that a collector with 106 members to call upon collected an average of 3s. 8d. per member per annum, whilst a collector with only five members to call upon, collected an average of 1s. 2d. per member per annum.

The success or otherwise of collectors depends upon their willingness and ability to collect *regularly*.

The central Membership Secretary is a Post Office worker by occupation, and particularly suited for the systematic routine work entailed.

The 16 ward membership secretaries receive the contributions from the collectors, and transmit to the central membership secretary. They also keep a ward contribution register, see that collectors are appointed, and

No. 1

— Contributions

----- Members

—— L.G. Vote

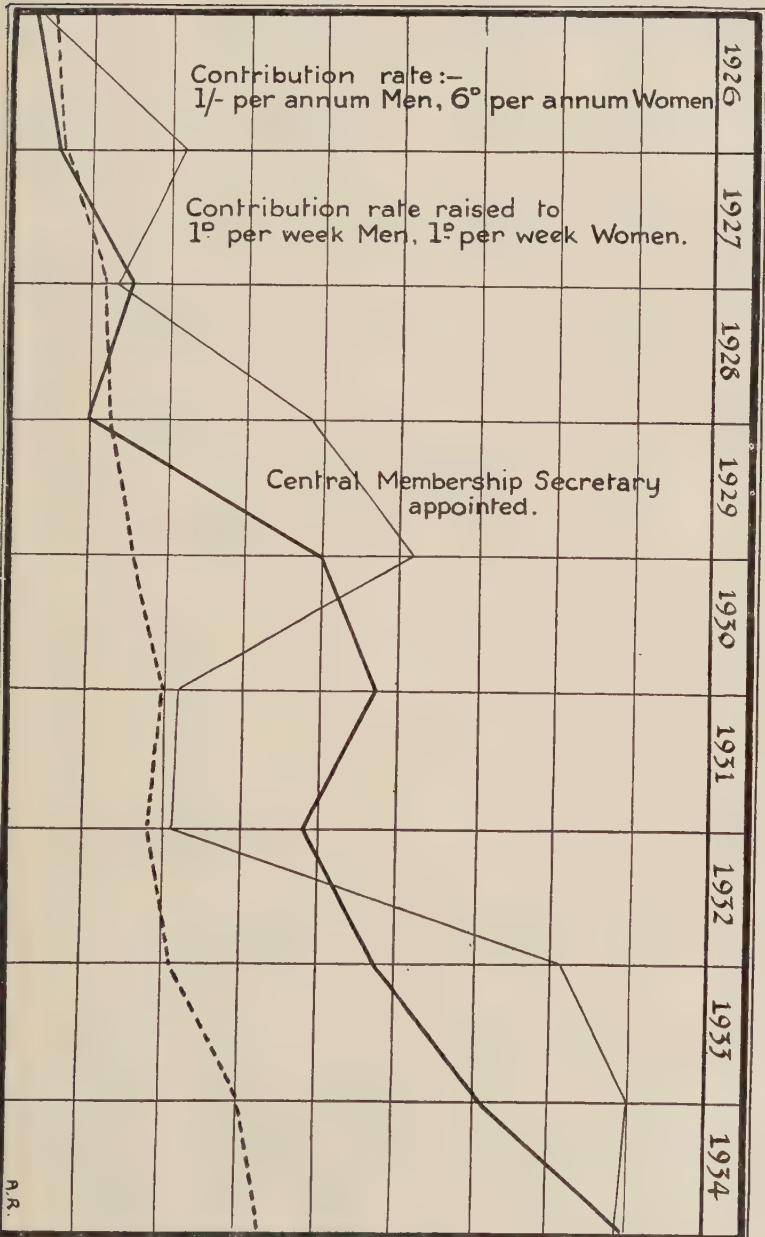
8000
7000
6000
5000
4000
3000
2000
1000

Contribution rate:—
1/- per annum Men, 6^d per annum Women

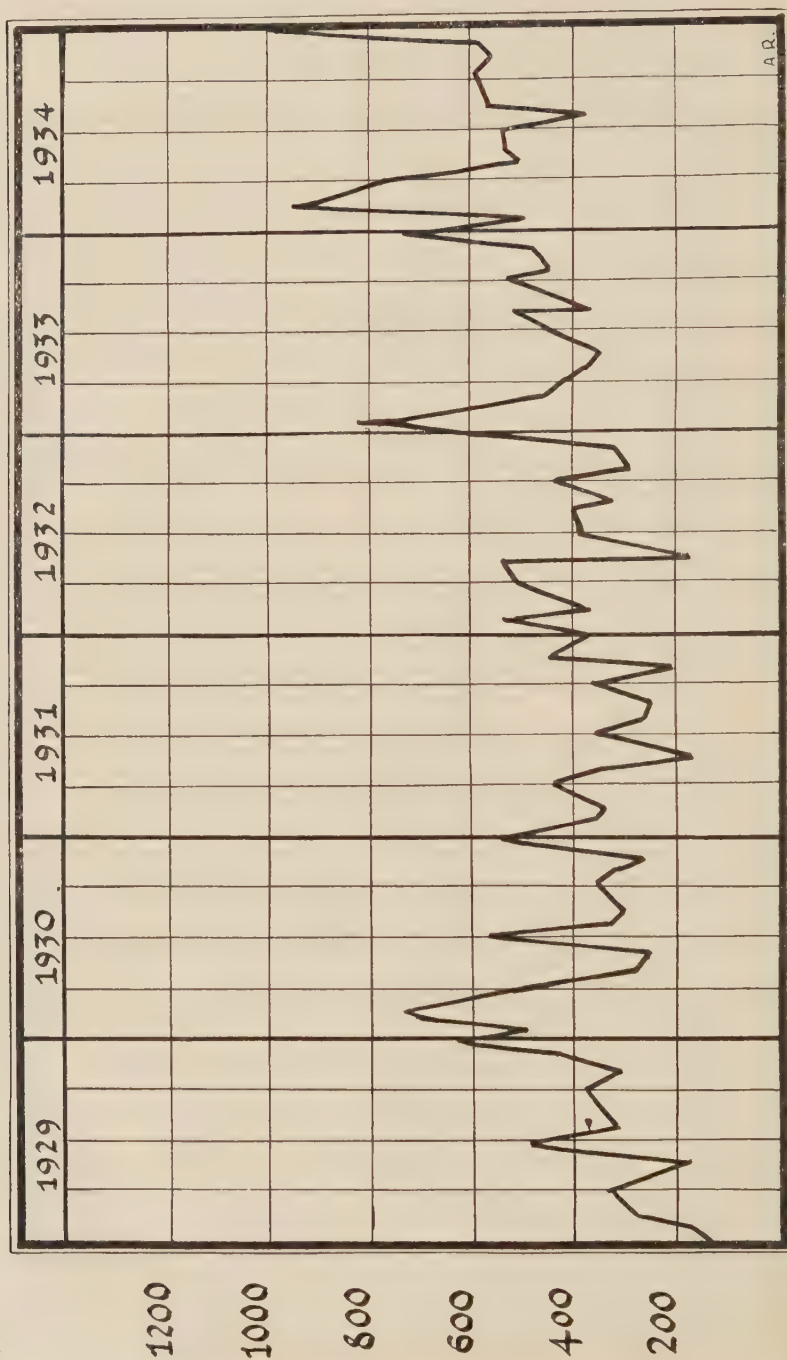
Contribution rate raised to
1^d per week Men, 1^d per week Women.

Central Membership Secretary
appointed.

1926 1927 1928 1929 1930 1931 1932 1933 1934



No. 2



generally organise the collection of contributions. Of these 16, 12 hold no position in Party work to interfere with their membership work. The remaining four also acting as ward committee secretaries.

Summary.

- 1 A loss of membership contributions results from special campaigns, elections and similar activities of the Party, due to interference with voluntary collectors.
2. Collections are definitely improved by the appointment of special officials to deal with the collection of membership contributions, such officials being kept as free as possible of other Party work.
- 3 The efficiency of the voluntary system is inadequate when membership exceeds 2,000, and a loss of contributions results.

Suggestions.

1. That a definite percentage should be set aside each year under the voluntary system, to provide for

the charges to be met in the initial stages of transition to a paid system.

2. Parties below 2,000 should be educated to the idea that paid collectors will be employed when the 2,000 mark is permanently passed.
3. Under a voluntary system, special membership officials should be appointed.
4. Pressure should be brought to bear to bring all Parties into line on 1d. a week contributions.

General Information.

Membership: 700 in 1926 — 3,250 in June, 1934.

Contributions: £30 in 1926—£300 in 1933.

Number of Collectors: 120.

Ward Membership Secretaries: 16.

Central Membership Secretary: 1.

Ward Committees: 17.

Payment: All membership officials completely voluntary.

Average annual contribution per member: 2s. 6d. to 2s. 9d.

Ward	Average Local Govt. Vote (5 years)	Percentage Local Govt. Voters Organised	Percentage of families with weekly incomes :—			
			to 41/-	42/- to 54/-	55/- to 80/-	over 80/-
A	789	6.0	20.1	34.9	33.1	11.9
B	1101	5.9	44.7	17.5	27.6	10.2
C	1348	7.3	16.0	41.2	37.4	5.4
D	1070	32.2	30.0	21.6	40.2	8.2
E	663	8.6	1.6	26.8	54.5	17.1
F	743	8.5	2.0	27.6	43.0	27.4
G	586	18.2	10.5	18.7	49.6	21.2
H	1185	6.3	18.0	16.7	48.1	17.2
I	1360	23.0	8.6	17.8	46.6	27.0
J	832	6.8	2.8	17.2	32.5	47.5
K	866	21.5	1.4	21.4	52.4	24.8
L	1229	8.0	11.4	23.0	48.2	17.4
M	1224	15.0	9.8	48.2	35.2	6.8
N	854	5.7	9.7	20.3	55.4	13.6
O	1411	31.6	9.0	22.1	50.5	18.4

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COMMENTS AND COMMENDATIONS

Congratulations to the Wealdstone North Ward Labour Party, branch of the Harrow Local Labour Party. Canvassing systematically, house to house, following the delivery of the February issue of the "Victory for Socialism" leaflets, this Party increased its membership from 165 to 380. This report is given us after only two-thirds of the ward has been covered. How many ward parties in other places will follow this example?

Congratulations to Crewe Labour Party, whose membership subscriptions for 1934 total £115, a record in its history. This is a county division with only one centre of population, and with two-thirds of the electorate spread over mining and agricultural belts. The following table shows the progress made during the last four years.

1931	Membership	Income	£27 19 5
1932	"	"	£60 14 1
1933	"	"	£86 14 9
1934	"	"	£115 5 8

Many enquiries reach us regarding a suitable form of membership register. We have been privileged to see a useful form of register in use at Greenwich, which is supplied by Messrs. Kenrick and Jefferson, of West Bromwich. This register is on the looseleaf principle, the cost of the binder being 3s. 6d. One hundred name-leaves cost 20s. and 200 insert-leaves 25s. Mr. R. Berriff, the agent to the Greenwich Labour Party, supplies one register to each ward secretary, and, therefore, has ten binders in use, the total cost to cover the membership of over 3,000 being a matter of about £4. A supply of renewal leaves to last five years costs £2. There is a good deal to be said for this form of membership register, for the binder lasts many years, and the loose-leaf principle allows for insertions as membership increases. The necessity for frequently re-writing names is obviated by the use of the insert-leaves, and re-writing is only necessary when many alterations and deletions occur on a particular page. After having examined one of the

ward books we were struck with the simplicity and convenience of this form of book, and no less by the steadiness and good quality of the membership. Readers desiring further information should write Messrs. Kenrick and Jefferson, mentioning the Greenwich Labour Party.

Frequently to the fore with good printing, the Stourbridge Divisional Labour Party (Agent, Councillor Sam Melsom, c/o 199, High Street, Lye, Nr. Stourbridge) produced their election addresses for the recent District Council Elections in quite novel form. Two or three forms of folder were used, each being somewhat unusual in get-up, but strikingly effective from the publicity point of view. Unfortunately, this type of thing does not lend itself to reproduction, but we have no doubt that Mr. Melsom would be pleased to send samples to readers interested enough to enclose stamp for postage. In our opinion Mr. Melsom has struck on a type of form admirably adapted for election addresses in other elections where novelty and pulling power is sought after.

Speaking of novelty in advertising, every publicity expert, of course, strives for the unusual. Mention must be made of the effective advertising done by the King's Norton Labour Party for its recent carnival and fair. The fair in itself embraced several unusual features, and included the election of a carnival queen, wireless exhibition, etc. The admission tickets were distinctly novel, being a little three-fold card both tastefully and effectively got up.

The Miles Platting Labour Party in announcing meetings for its candidate, the Rt. Hon. J. R. Clynes, never forgets the kind of information people want. What is the use of asking people to join the Labour Party unless you tell them what it costs, or where they can apply to, and give them also something to read. The following little item on the back of the invitation cards illustrates what we refer to.

"With this invitation we enclose some Party leaflets which we ask you kindly to read.

"If, after perusal, you are in agreement with the views expressed, we suggest that you help to put them into operation by joining the Party. The weekly subscription is one penny. If you wish to become a member please write your name and address below and hand to a steward, or post to Councillor A. James, 2a, Enoch Street, Miles Platting. Thank you."

THAT LOUD SPEAKER EQUIPMENT

See
Page 67

**WHY NOT
ORDER NOW?**

A FIGHTER REPEATS HIS STORY*

By GEO. W. BYWATER, of Northrepps, Norfolk.

Two years ago on a page in the "Labour Organiser" I described my experiences as a candidate for a seat on our local R.D.C. Having just fought—and lost—a by-election for the same seat, it may be of interest to your city and urban readers to describe events in their chronological order.

The by-election was necessitated on account of a revision in the R.D.C. area, resulting in a dual representation for our landlord's village. Obviously, here was my chance for a Labour success, because the local landlording family from the village ancestral home was already a member of the R.D.C.—I not being able to unseat her two years ago.

A well-informed local Tory gave me the hint that his organisation regarded the writer as the standard bearer for Labour, with himself as the nominee of his party. Good. If there was no "Dark Horse" in the field on nomination day, Labour's chance made me feel supremely optimistic as to the result.

Nomination day was a revelation. I found myself in contest, not with my expected opponent, but with the Great Squire himself who literally owns the parish, houses, land and all. Here was a proposition indeed for me to measure up to. I was lone-handed in the fight, except, of course, the valuable help from our Divisional Party H.Q.

When I essayed an attempt to un-

seat the Squire's sister two years ago, I had a small Local Labour Party of third, or thirteenth-rate class-conscious fighters at my command. But within a few hours of the knowledge of my determination to challenge the "Lady Bountiful" for the seat, my Local Labour Party vanished with a magic that surprised me, and I take some shocking!

To-day, after a couple of years' intensified effort it is not possible to revive the party. To be brutally frank, it is because of FEAR. A fear that daily governs the lives of our rural people; they are afraid of jeopardising their miserable economic standard of life. The fear of the "Tied Cottage" habitant is tragically real. They are afraid to come to Labour meetings, afraid of the farmer, the "Master," the parson.

Having learned their psychology, I drafted an election address fully covering Labour's policy, and an accompanying leaflet explaining "Why I am a Socialist." With this in their possession along with a personal canvass I could do no more.

It was the usual custom to poll in the village school, but this practice had mysteriously disappeared, and the booth was a dingy room over a mile away from the customary place. The reason advanced for this change of venue, "that it would interfere with the children's education," would not hold water, because previously a vacant room in the school had sufficed and would do so again.

There were traffic jams all over the village caused by the fleet of cars

*See "L.O." for September, 1933. Page 174.

placed at my opponent's disposal. It was ludicrous to watch them chasing each other in circles all round the parish. It was a circus indeed; power and money was against me, and it did its work. My opponents had a professional organiser at work for a week in the parish. He was from Divisional Tory H.Q., and he knew his job, and did it well. Where are Labour's resources for this work?

On my arrival to cast my vote I was surprised to find our local parson ensconced in the polling station chatting amicably with the presiding officer—our parson is a rabid Tory and writes vile criticism about me in his parish magazine. After voting I turned and enquired of the holy one by what right he should stay in the booth and scrutinise the electors while polling was in progress. As I considered there was enough intimidation without his illegal presence in the room.

I protested to the presiding officer at allowing the parson to stay in the

room while others voted. I also called the attention of my opponent's agent to the matter; he was within the precincts and must have known what was happening. The rector asked me, "How long did I think he had been there?" I retorted, "I do not know, but you were there when I arrived, and while I voted — over which I was unduly slow—and apparently meant to stay all day."

The presiding officer, realising the justification of my protest, apologised for his indiscretion in allowing the parson privilege. The parson was furious and stomped off to his car to help in his Christian work of keeping the countryside for feudalism.

Result:

The register showed a total of 350 electors. Of the 249 votes cast, final figures were

Toryism 177
Labour 72

105 Tory majority.

TEACHING THE LITTLE CHILDREN

AN ILLUSTRATION AND AN EXAMPLE.

"The London County Council has decided that there shall be no Cadet Corps in any of its secondary schools and are asking that the admission of a boy to a rate-aided secondary school should not be conditional on his joining its Cadet Corps.

"By this decision the Council has set an example which, we trust, will be followed by other educational authorities. It holds that the Cadet Corps inculcates views contrary to that spirit of peace and international goodwill which the Council desires to encourage in its schools.

"The Chairman of the Higher Education Committee suggested that dressing boys in khaki, lending them weapons, and sending them to march behind a band, were giving them a false standard of values because the beastly side of warfare was omitted. Their task was to fit a boy for life and industry, and not to train him for the Army."

The above extract is taken from the "Children's Newspaper" (publishers, The Amalgamated Press Ltd.).

Strange is it not that great Editor, Mr. Arthur Mee should not fear to put these views in a capitalist newspaper before his child readers, while the Labour Party shudders at the brink and fears to organise the children or give them any political education?

Readers of our series of articles on this question will, we hope, continue to carefully ponder on this matter. If they do not, the future of the League of Youth is in peril, and so are we. Remember what Germany's Youth has done!

APPRECIATION.

Councillor W. H. Oldfield, J.P., Secretary of the Gorton Trades and Labour Council, writes us:—

"I herewith enclose postal order value 17s. 6d., the same being our contribution for the year to the best paper in the land. May your hand long flourish to give us our monthly meat"

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TORY TACTICS.

We have already drawn the attention of our readers to the fact that leading Tory speakers have shown their hand regarding the tactics they will pursue at the General Election.

Mr. Runciman started the ball with a threat to withdraw his capital from the country should a Labour Government be returned. Mr. Baldwin ably followed on with the now customary blood-curdling picture of what is to happen to everybody's savings, to the banks — even to civilisation itself, if Labour gets returned.

That Tory speakers and Tory literature rarely deal with an exposition of Tory policy has become an axiom. Speeches and literature are mostly made up of vituperative attacks on the Labour Party. Now for a further revelation of coming Tory tactics.

The lie factory is apparently busy for the coming election, and in a leaflet just published on behalf of the Government the electors are told that the Labour Party propose to govern as dictators, that private ownership of all land and houses is to end, with no guarantee of fair compensation; and that Parliament is to be robbed of most of its powers, etc., etc.

So the snare is set in sight of the bird. And having seen it our readers are advised to scotch these scares *now*; to use every opportunity to acquaint the electors with Tory methods, to remind them of past scares, and forewarn them of future ones.

It is all very well for us to be contemptuous of these things, but the

public can and will be stampeded again, unless they are made to understand. There is really something humorous in this everlasting cry of bogey-bogey. Can we bring the humour of it home to the electors, for nothing kills like ridicule?

Labour speakers have plenty of material on which to build in order to expose past scares. Let us also carry the war into the enemy camp. The continuance of a Tory Government in office would almost certainly mean war, and millions of more dead. It was our opponents who blundered into the last war, whose financial gambblings brought about the financial crisis of 1931, and who, after three years of office, have failed to solve a single one of the great problems confronting society to-day.

Our enemies are now playing the prosperity stunt for all it is worth. Labour speakers have plenty of material with which to answer the pretensions of the Nationals in this regard. If this is to be our enemies' chosen ground, coupled with that of scaremongering, their case can be killed long before the General Election arrives. It is indeed so ridiculous that it is hardly necessary to manufacture the ridicule.

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